

# Infant Mortality



## Risk Factors:

- **Age**  
Births to women less than 16 years of age or to women aged 44 years and older have a higher risk of infant mortality.
- **Race/Ethnicity**  
African Americans have the highest infant mortality rate in the nation.
- **Low Birth Weight**
- **Plural/Multiple Births**
- **Smoking during pregnancy**
- **Lack of Prenatal Care**
- **Poor Nutrition**
- **Alcohol and drug use**
- **Maternal Education**  
Lower maternal education is associated with higher rates of infant mortality.
- **Marital Status**  
Infants of non-married mothers have higher risk of poor outcomes.

Infant mortality is defined as the death of a baby less than one year of age.

It is often used as an indicator of the health of a nation.

Nearly half of all infant deaths are caused by congenital malformations, low birthweight, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

## Facts

- In 2005, nearly 30,000 infants died before the age of one year in the United States.
- The national infant mortality rate was 6.68 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2006.
- The U.S. ranked 30th in the world for infant mortality in 2005.
- In San Diego County, the infant mortality rate was 5.1 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2007.

For more information and data go to [www.SDHealthStatistics.com](http://www.SDHealthStatistics.com)

Community Health Statistics Unit:  
619-285-6479

## Prevention

- Avoid smoking during pregnancy.
- Do not use alcohol and drugs during pregnancy.
- Seek prenatal care.
- Maintain a healthy diet during pregnancy.
- Always place sleeping infants on their backs to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome.



## Resources

County of San Diego: Maternal, Child, and Family Health Services  
[www.sdmcfhs.org](http://www.sdmcfhs.org)

American Sudden Infant Death Institute  
[www.sids.org](http://www.sids.org)

